



EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES
BUCHAREST · ROMANIA

U.S. Embassy Newsletter

Activities and events from across the US Mission in Bucharest

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FROM THE AMBASSADOR



AMBASSADOR NICHOLAS F.
TAUBMAN

“The most important meeting in the history of Bucharest and Romania” was the characterization of the NATO Summit by the Romanian Government prior to the event. Post-meeting comments from all NATO members confirmed this as well as the productivity and importance of decisions taken at the 59th year of NATO’s existence.

Over 3000 attendees were at this conference. In addition to the heads of state, prime ministers, foreign ministers and military leaders, there were hundreds of others attending on the fringes of NATO’s Summit. Non-member countries such as Russia and other countries surrounding the Black Sea attended, as well as countless media and political think-tank experts and consultants.

Immodestly, I must declare Embassy Bucharest’s Romanian colleagues outdid themselves in the execution of this Summit. Almost an entire year went into planning this event and it all paid off in what can only be described as flawless execution.

President Bush flew in Air Force One across Romania to meet bi-laterally with President Basescu at his Black Sea residence. This meeting resulted in fruitful talks and important decisions which will further enhance our already excellent relationship.

First Lady Laura Bush and her party made multiple appearances during the course of the Summit. From students to gymnasts to religious leaders, she represented important aspects of our long standing and successful bi-lateral relations.

All were intensely busy at NATO Summit, especially Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and Secretary of Defense Robert Gates. This was all the more true as this summit was characterized by the attending leaders sitting down over document-strewn tables hammering out new and important agreements for NATO and its member countries.

The biggest beneficiaries of this meeting may very well have been Bucharest and Romania. Leaders of many states saw Romania for the first time. Their impressions were ones of a robust country in the midst of recovery from 50 years of communism. They saw a picture of huge economic growth and a better life for Romanians, with even greater promise in the future.

My thanks go to all Romanians and to members of the community of Embassy Bucharest. Well done, colleagues!

Ambassador Taubman

EMBASSY HIGHLIGHTS



President Bush stands with Secretary Rice, during the North Atlantic Council Summit in Bucharest. Bucharest, April 3, 2008. (White House photo by Eric Draper)

President Bush At NATO’s North Atlantic Council Summit Meeting
“NATO’s door must remain open to other nations in Europe that share our love for liberty, and demonstrate a commitment to reform, and seek to strengthen their ties with the transatlantic community” said President Bush in a speech at the Romanian Palace of Parliament. At the North Atlantic Meeting, the President welcomed Albania and Croatia for joining NATO. He also expressed his regret that NATO could not reach a consensus regarding Macedonia and underlined that the problem of the name should be solved as soon as possible.

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President George W. Bush delivers a keynote speech at the National Bank of Savings in Bucharest. Bucharest, April 2 2008(Mediafax Foto).

President Bush: “Romania has made strong contributions to the Alliance.”

In a speech at the National Bank of Savings, President Bush made his first remarks about and previewed his expectations of the NATO Summit organized in Bucharest, April 2-4, 2008. The President greeted the audience in Romanian and spoke on a wide range of issues, from US policy to Europe, Iraq and Afghanistan, to the NATO’s role, relations with Russia and missile defense strategy. He also mentioned the courage of Romanian soldiers like Second Lieutenant Aurel Marcu of Romania's 33rd Mountain Battalion who was killed in Afghanistan while his unit responded to a call for assistance from U.S. soldiers. The President also recalled the rainbow that appeared on the sky during his first visit in Romania in 2002 and reiterated his appreciation of US- Romania friendship.

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President Bush and President Traian Basescu of Romania, pose for photographs Wednesday, April 2, 2008, on a seawall at the presidential retreat in Neptun, Romania. (White House photo by Eric Draper)

President Bush Thanks President Basescu for Romania’s Contributions in Afghanistan and Iraq and Leadership in the Black Sea Region

Presidents Bush and Basescu met in Neptun on the Black Sea on April 2 to discuss a wide range of bilateral issues. In a joint news conference, the presidents noted they had discussed the upcoming NATO Summit, as well as Afghanistan and Iraq, the Black Sea and the visa waiver program. President Bush commented that the United States “appreciate(s) your leadership in the Black Sea region,” adding that [we] share your concerns about enhanced security and making sure this part of the world becomes relevant in a global economy.”

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President Bush and Prime Minister Tariceanu (Photo: GOV.ro)

President Bush Congratulates Prime Minister Popescu-Tariceanu of Romania on “Big Investments” Coming to Romania

President Bush and Romania’s Prime Minister Popescu-Tariceanu met to discuss in Bucharest after the NATO Summit and a wide range of bilateral issues including U.S. investment in Romania, energy issues and visas for Romanians wanting to visit the United States. In response to Prime Minister Popescu-Tariceanu’s remarks about the new Ford Motor Company investment in Romania President Bush congratulated the Prime Minister, saying “conditions are such that people are willing to invest. And investment creates jobs, which have a direct benefit for the people of Romania.”

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President Bush announces creation of Romanian – American Foundation. Neptun, April 2, 2008 (Photo: Sorin Lupsa/ Presidency.ro).

President Bush Announces Creation of Romanian American Foundation to Support Education

After the April 2 meeting with his Romanian counterpart, President Bush announced the creation of the Romanian - American Foundation as a gift from the people of the United States to the people of Romania. The Romanian American Foundation, with an endowment of approximately 150 million USD, will advance private sector economic development and conditions for democratic stability by support for non-profit institutions. In its early years, the Foundation will concentrate its programs on education, job creation and entrepreneurship, targeting currently underserved geographic areas and groups of the population.

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Mrs. Laura Bush participates in a civic education forum at the Central University Library of Bucharest. April 4, 2008 (White House photo by Shealah Craighead)

Students Brief First Lady on Community Service Projects

Mrs. Laura Bush met Romanian high school students from around the country to hear about their community service projects and discuss volunteerism. High school students presented projects like promoting school attendance by Roma children, supporting orphans, the disabled and the elderly, promoting democratic student elections and discouraging the use of drugs and alcohol among students. Mrs. Bush expressed her support for their commitment to their communities, and encouraged them to continue volunteering. She offered special thanks to the teachers for cultivating their students' civic commitment and said the U.S. will continue to support those working to strengthen Romanian democracy.

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Mrs. Laura Bush speaks at the Bucharest headquarters of the Romanian Intelligence Service. April 3, 2008 (White House photo by Shealah Craighead)

First Lady addresses Young Atlanticists in Bucharest and Kabul

On April 3, the First Lady Laura Bush joined the "Young Atlanticist Summit," organized by the U.S. Atlantic Council and the Euro-Atlantic Council in Romania – NATO House as a meeting opportunity for future leaders in the Euro-Atlantic region. Laura Bush addressed the message of supporting Afghanistan's young democracy and expending liberty for all, to a youth audience in Bucharest and to students at Kabul University through a video conference. "The signs of progress in Afghanistan are heartening, but much work remains. The United States is committing to help the people of Afghanistan achieve the goal of a stable and democratic future," said the First Lady.

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Mrs. Laura Bush listens as Dr. Petre Radu Guran explains the finer details of the Stavropoleos Church in Bucharest. April 4, 2008 (White House photo by Shealah Craighead)

First Lady visits historic religious site in Bucharest

During her last day in Romania, Laura Bush visited Stavropoleos Monastery, where she listened to a Byzantine choir and toured the museum and the library of the religious site. She later addressed the media from the church's courtyard, restored in 2003 through a grant from the Ambassador's Fund for Cultural Preservation, saying, "Thank you for saving all of these magnificent items of Christianity for all of us who are Christians to be able to venerate."

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<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Ambassador■ Press Releases■ Joint Task Force – East■ U.S. Forces in Romania	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Visas to the U.S.■ Visa Application Forms■ Visa F.A.Q.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">■ Fulbright Commission■ Information Resource Center■ Teachers Resource Center■ Meet the USA
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